

“I’ll speak in proper slang”: Language ideologies in a daily editing activity

AMANDA J. GODLEY
BRIAN D. CARPENTER

University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA

CYNTHIA A. WERNER

Wexford, Pennsylvania, USA

The fourth-period bell has just rung. As the students in Cindy Werner’s (third author) 10th-grade English class settle into their seats, they turn their attention to the chalkboard, on which Cindy has written the “Daily Language Practice,” the daily opening grammar/editing activity. Today, the practice sentence reads, “People treat the old man very bad.” Students sit at their desks and individually edit the practice sentence before sharing their answers in front of the class. After four minutes, Richard (all students’ names are pseudonyms) asks and receives permission from Cindy to make the needed corrections on the chalkboard. As he stands at the board, chalk in hand, a classmate suggests, “Put an *-ed* after treat.” (See Appendix A for transcript conventions.)

Cindy: No, there’s nothing wrong with the verb. The verb is fine.

Student: Then let me get up there then.

Cindy: G—give Richard a chance. No, there’s nothing wrong with *people*.
I’cause it’s saying what the people did.

Student: [Don’t tell him, Ms. Werner.

Richard: It’s right.

Aaron: I’m up here [xx]. Now what you all sayin’? (*Aaron walks up to the blackboard as Richard sits down.*)

Ebony: Put an *-ly* after bad, No:

Aaron erases the a in man, but as he finishes erasing, Cindy gently pushes him away and replaces the a.

Aaron: [What’re you doing?

THE PURPOSE of this study was to examine the language ideologies—the assumptions about the nature of language, language variation, and language learning—reflected in a widespread daily editing activity often known as Daily Oral Language or Daily Language Practice. Through a yearlong ethnographic study of grammar instruction in three urban, predominantly African American 10th-grade English classes, two university researchers and the classroom teacher collaboratively analyzed the language ideologies reflected through the teacher's implementation of Daily Language Practice. Using methods of the ethnography of communication and classroom discourse analysis, they coded for the content and sources of recurring language ideologies and their links to state standards and assessments. Findings show that Daily Language Practice represented the English language as monolithic, language form as disconnected from meaning, and written Standard English as the only correct dialect of English. However, some students in the study concurrently expressed alternate language ideologies through their participation in Daily Language Practice, ideologies that foregrounded language variation and its dependence on context and audience. Findings suggest that daily editing activities provide limited opportunities for students to learn about language in ways that build off their existing linguistic resources and that could enhance their literacy learning.

**“I’ll speak in proper slang”:
Language ideologies in a daily editing activity**

EL PROPÓSITO de este estudio fue examinar las ideologías lingüísticas, es decir los supuestos sobre la naturaleza del lenguaje, la variación lingüística y el aprendizaje del lenguaje, tal como se reflejan en una actividad de edición muy difundida conocida como Lenguaje Oral Cotidiano o Práctica Cotidiana del Lenguaje. En un estudio etnográfico de un año centrado en la enseñanza de la gramática en tres clases de inglés de 10º grado con una población urbana mayoritariamente afroamericana, dos docentes universitarios y el docente del aula analizaron las ideologías lingüísticas reflejadas a partir de la implementación de la Práctica Cotidiana del Lenguaje. Usando los métodos de la etnografía de la comunicación y el análisis del discurso en el aula, se codificó el contenido y las fuentes de las ideologías lingüísticas recurrentes y sus vínculos con estándares y evaluaciones. Los resultados muestran que la Práctica Cotidiana del Lenguaje representa la lengua inglesa como monolítica, la forma lingüística desconectada del significado y el inglés escrito estándar como el único dialecto correcto del inglés. Sin embargo, algunos estudiantes expresaron ideologías lingüísticas alternativas a través de su participación en la Práctica Cotidiana del Lenguaje, ideologías que reconocían la variación lingüística y su dependencia del contexto y la audiencia. Los hallazgos sugieren que las actividades cotidianas de edición proporcionan oportunidades limitadas a los estudiantes para aprender acerca del lenguaje de maneras que apunten sus propios recursos lingüísticos y que mejoren su aprendizaje de la lengua.

**“Voy a hablar en correcto slang”:
Ideologías lingüísticas en una actividad cotidiana de edición**

ZWECK DIESER STUDIE war es, die Sprachideologien zu untersuchen—die Voraussetzungen über die Natur der Sprache, die Sprachvariation, und das Erlernen der Sprache—reflektierend in einer weitverbreiteten täglichen Redigieraktivität, häufig benannt als Aussprache in alltäglicher Mundart oder alltäglicher Umgangssprachpraxis. Durch eine langjährige ethnographische Studie von Grammatikunterweisungen in drei städtischen, überwiegend afrikanisch-amerikanischen zehnten Englischklassen analysierten zwei Universitätsforscher und der Klassenlehrer gemeinsam die Sprachideologien, reflektiert durch die Lehreranweisung in der alltäglichen Sprachpraxis. Unter Nutzung von Methoden der Kommunikationsethnographie und Klassenraumdiskursanalyse kodierte man nach Inhalt und Quellen von sich wiederholenden Sprachideologien und ihren Bindungen an Länderstandards und Bewertungen. Die Erkenntnisse zeigen, daß sich in der alltäglichen Sprachpraxis die englische Sprache als monolithisch, Sprachform als abgespalten von Deutung, und schriftliches Standardenglisch als einzig korrekter Englischdialekt repräsentieren. Dennoch, einige Schüler dieser Studie brachten gleichzeitig alternative Sprachideologien zum Ausdruck durch ihre Teilnahme in der alltäglichen Sprachpraxis, durch Ideologien, die der Sprachvariation vorangehen, und durch ihre Abhängigkeit von Kontext und Zuhörern. Die Ergebnisse lassen darauf schließen, daß alltägliche Redigieraktivitäten begrenzte Gelegenheiten für Schüler schaffen, die Sprache auf eine Weise zu erlernen, die auf ihre bestehenden Sprachressourcen aufbauen und die ihr Erlernen des Lesens und Schreibens vertiefen könnten.

**“Ich werde im angemessenen Slang sprechen”:
Sprachideologien in einer alltäglichen Redigieraktivität**

「適切なスラングで話します」：日常的編集活動における言語イデオロギー

本研究の目的は、デイリー オーラル ランゲージ又はデイリー ランゲージ プラクティスとしてしばしば知られている普及した日常的編集活動に反映された言語イデオロギー、即ち、言語、言語変異、言語学習の性質に関する前提を研究することであった。都市にあり、主にアフリカ系アメリカ人で形成されている3つの10年生の英語クラスにおける文法指導に関する一年間の民族学的研究を行うことで、大学の研究者2人と担任教師が、教師によるデイリー ランゲージ プラクティスの実行を通じて反映された言語イデオロギーを協同分析した。コミュニケーションの民族誌と教室談話分析の方法を用いて、再発する言語イデオロギーの内容と源、またイデオロギーの州の標準と評価への関わりを分析した。結果、デイリー ランゲージ プラクティスによって、英語が一枚岩的なものとして、言語形式が意味から切り離されたものとして、また書かれた標準英語が英語の正しい唯一の方言として表されていることが示された。しかし、研究に参加した学生の中には、同時に、デイリー ランゲージ プラクティスへの参加を通じて代わりの言語イデオロギー、言語変異とそのコンテキストや相手への依存を前面に出したイデオロギーを表現した者もいた。結果、日常的な編集活動は、現存の言語的資源を基にし、リテラシー学習を促進し得る方法で、学生達が言葉について学習するための限られた機会を提供していることが示唆される。

«Je parle avec
mon argot à moi»:
idéologies du
langage dans une
activité de
préparation
quotidienne

CETTE ÉTUDE avait pour but d'examiner les idéologies du langage – les postulats relatifs à la nature du langage, les variations langagières, et l'apprentissage du langage – tels qu'ils reflètent les activités de préparation quotidiennes très répandue souvent désignée par Langage oral quotidien ou Pratique du langage quotidien. En procédant tout au long de l'année à une étude ethnographique de leçons de grammaire dans trois classes urbaines regroupant principalement de jeunes Afro-américains de 10^e année (classe de 2^e), deux chercheurs universitaires et un professeur d'école ont analysé ensemble les idéologies du langage qui passent à travers la façon de procéder du professeur en Pratique du langage quotidien. Le contenu et les sources des idéologies récurrentes du langage et leurs liens aux normes et évaluations officielles ont été codés en utilisant les méthodes de l'ethnographie de la communication et l'analyse du discours en classe. Les résultats montrent que la Pratique du langage quotidien se représente la langue anglaise de façon monolithique, la forme linguistique comme déconnectée du sens, et l'anglais écrit standard comme le seul dialecte anglais correct. Toutefois, certains étudiants participant à cette recherche ont exprimé en même temps des idéologies alternatives du langage lors de leur participation au Langage oral quotidien, des idéologies tournées vers les variations du langage en fonction du contexte et du public. Les résultats suggèrent que les activités de préparation quotidiennes aux élèves fournissent des occasions limitées de faire des acquisitions en matière de langage allant au-delà de ce qu'ils savent déjà et leur permettant de développer leur lettrisme.

«Я буду говорить
правильно»:
представления о
языке, отраженные в
ежедневном
саморедактировании

Цель данного исследования состояла в том, чтобы изучить представления о языке – его природе, разновидностях и путях его познания, – отраженные в нашей повсеместной ежедневной деятельности по «редактированию», то есть созданию устного бытового языка. Два университетских преподавателя и школьный учитель совместно проанализировали представления о языке, отраженные в ежедневной языковой практике этого учителя в рамках этнографического исследования обучения грамматике в трех 10-х классах городской школы с преобладающим афро-американским контингентом учащихся. Используя методы этнографии общения и анализ классного дискурса, авторы анализировали содержание и источники повторяющихся представлений о языке и их связи с учебными стандартами и критериями оценки, принятыми в этом штате. Полученные результаты показывают, что ежедневная языковая практика учителя основывалась на следующих представлениях: английский язык монолитен; языковые формы оторваны от значений слов; стандартный письменный язык – единственный правильный вариант английского языка. В то же время, некоторые учащиеся – посредством участия в ежедневной языковой практике – выражали дополнительные представления о языке, отдавая приоритет разновидностям языка и сознавая его зависимость от контекста и аудитории. Полученные результаты свидетельствуют о том, что постоянное редактирование ограничивает возможности учащихся познавать язык теми способами, которые основаны на имеющихся у них лингвистических ресурсах, хотя это могло бы способствовать становлению их языковой грамотности.

- Cindy: [No. Ebony, you said it before, so go ahead. (Some students laugh.) Ebony, what did you say? (Aaron goes back to his seat.) That's [it? *As she puts -ly at the end of bad to make it badly.*
- Ebony: [No, I said old men [very badly
- Cindy: [Listen up
- Ebony: Old men very [badly
- Cindy: [Listen up. Ba:ddly is an a:dverb. Most of the time adverbs end in -ly, Tyrone, and it tells us more about the verb (*pause*) so how did the people treat the old man? Very [badly.
- Student: [badly.
- Cindy: Tyrone?
- Tyrone: Huh?
- Cindy: Does (*pause*) [that make sense?
- Tyrone: [Yeah.
- Cindy: Go:od.

As this example illustrates, explicit grammar instruction is back. Academic research (Broughton & Fairbanks, 2002; Dyson, 2004), newspaper reports (Fish, 2005; Schworm, 2005; Zernike, 2004), and National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) publications (Haussamen, Benjamin, Kolln, & Wheeler, 2003; NCTE, 2004) reflect a renewed interest in the explicit teaching of grammar, often in response to the inclusion of grammar assessment in high-stakes standardized tests such as the new Scholastic Aptitude Test writing section (The College Board, 2006) and the state assessments mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB, 2002).

At the same time, empirical studies of grammar instruction have been scarce in English language arts research for the past 20 years, leaving researchers and practitioners unclear about the characteristics of effective grammar instruction. Newspaper articles (Zernike, 2004), brief descriptions in current research (Broughton & Fairbanks, 2002; Dyson, 2004), and recently published curriculum materials (*Elements of Literature*, 2005; *Writer's Choice*, 2005) indicate that most current grammar instruction centers on labeling parts of speech, parsing sentences, and editing isolated sentences. Although meta-analyses of research on grammar instruction have strongly suggested that parsing sentences and labeling parts of speech do not improve students' writing (Andrews et al., 2004; Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, & Schoer, 1963; Hillocks, 1986), little is known about the effects of sentence-level editing activities (Weaver, 1996).

Sentence-level editing activities such as the Daily Language Practice activity that is the focus of this study appear to be widely used in middle and high school English classes across the United States.

Although no quantitative, national survey exists on this kind of grammar instruction, which is commonly known as Daily Oral Language or Daily Language Practice, similar activities appear in the supplemental teacher materials included in most widely adopted high school English textbooks, such as *The Language of Literature* (2006), *Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes* (2003), and *Writer's Choice* (2005). In addition, numerous Daily Language Practice or Daily Oral Language websites and retail materials for teachers attest to the strong presence of this kind of grammar instruction in the United States. A query we posted on the electronic mailing list of NCTE's Assembly for the Teaching of English Grammar (Godley, 2005) received responses from educators across the United States in such states as Wisconsin, Georgia, New York, and Colorado that indicated that Daily Language Practice or Daily Oral Language is being used widely in secondary English classrooms and is often part of the official curricula of school districts. The lack of research on the learning opportunities that these daily editing activities provide students suggest that it is an approach to grammar instruction that warrants closer and more systematic study.

Typically, research on grammar instruction has examined only the effects of instruction on students' writing, parsing of sentences, and scores on standardized tests (Andrews et al., 2004; Braddock et al., 1963; Hillocks, 1986). Studies of the teaching of grammar rarely examine what students learn about the nature of language and language use through particular kinds of instruction. However, we believe that it is equally important to examine the language ideologies—that is, the implicit and explicit assumptions about the nature of language, language use, and language variety (Gal, 1998)—that are taught through grammar instruction such as Daily Language Practice. Researching the language ideologies expressed through particular approaches to grammar instruction can reveal the explicit and implicit assumptions about language that teachers and students hold and the literacy learning opportunities such assumptions provide or constrain.

Understanding the language ideologies implicit in various types of grammar instruction can also allow educators to make more deliberate decisions about how to portray and teach the nature of language within literacy instruction, particularly because grammar instruction is often the only part of English language arts instruction in which language uses and language choices are taught overtly.

Current research demonstrates that language ideologies influence literacy instruction in significant ways by framing particular uses of language as accept-

able or unacceptable and by positioning particular students as more- or less-skilled language users (Bloome, Katz, & Champion, 2003; Pomerantz, 2002). Often these language ideologies are not expressed explicitly by teachers, students, or curricular materials, but are implied through patterns of classroom participation, specific word choices, or teachers' reactions to particular students (Bloome, Carter, Christian, Otto, & Shuart-Faris, 2005; Gutierrez, 1994). Thus, literacy educators can gain a better understanding of the language ideologies reflected in particular kinds of grammar instruction through analyzing both curricular materials and classroom discourse.

This article reports on a yearlong ethnographic study of the language ideologies reflected through Daily Language Practice, the daily editing activity illustrated at the beginning of our article, in three predominantly African American 10th-grade English classes in an urban high school. The study was conducted collaboratively by two university researchers, Amanda and Brian, and the teacher of the classes, Cindy. In this article, we examine how language ideologies were expressed through the patterns of classroom participation and through teacher and student talk during the Daily Language Practice. We also explore the sources of the dominant language ideologies reflected in the activity and the learning opportunities that the activity constructed for students.

We used the following questions to guide our research: (1) How do the state standards, state assessments, and official curriculum surrounding the Daily Language Practice represent particular language ideologies? (2) How are these language ideologies reflected in the patterns and structure of the classroom discourse surrounding Daily Language Practice? (3) How are language ideologies expressed and contested through teacher and student talk during the Daily Language Practice? (4) How did the Daily Language Practice shape students' understanding of the grammar and conventions of written Standard English, particularly as reflected in beginning- and end-of-the-year assessments?

Review of related literature: Language ideologies and grammar instruction

Conceptual framework: Language ideologies

The conceptual framework of this study rests on the notion that beliefs about language, or lan-

guage ideologies, play a powerful, if often unspoken, role in English language arts instruction because those beliefs define what counts as appropriate or correct language use and learning. Although a variety of definitions for the term *language ideologies* can be found in social science research (see Woolard & Schieffelin, 1994, for a partial review of these definitions), language ideologies have been most often defined as the assumptions about language that are collectively held by a particular group of people within a particular sociocultural and historical context (Wassink & Curzan, 2004; Wortham, 2001). Research in linguistic anthropology has demonstrated how language ideologies create and uphold systems of power in institutions such as schools by positing some languages or dialects as more grammatical or educated than others (Gal, 1989). In the United States, widespread and dominant language ideologies, which often assume that Standard English is the only legitimate dialect of English and view other dialects such as African American English as incorrect, have been shown to inhibit the literacy learning of students who speak dialects of English that are not considered mainstream such as African American English (Ball, 1995; Delpit, 1995; Jordan, 1988; Smitherman, 1977).

Any label bestowed upon a particular use or form of language carries with it ideological assumptions about language; therefore, we believe it is necessary to explain why we have chosen to use particular terms here and throughout our article. We use the term *Standard English* to refer to the oral and written dialects of English privileged in U.S. academic, civic, and professional institutions and the mainstream media. We recognize that this label is problematic because it upholds the myth of a single correct dialect of any language (Milroy, 2001); however, it is the most widely accepted term used by linguists and educators. The subset of Standard English that is considered appropriate for most academic, professional, and public writing we call *written Standard English* in order to highlight the specific grammatical features and conventions that are unique to written, as opposed to spoken, Standard English. Also, we employ the term *stigmatized dialects* rather than *nonstandard dialects* to refer to the dialects of English that are often institutionally stigmatized because it allows us to avoid the connotations of ungrammaticality associated with the term *nonstandard*. Finally, throughout this article, we use the term *African American English* because it is the most widely accepted term in the field of linguistics to refer to the dialect of English spoken in many African American discourse communities across the

United States. We do not mean to imply that all African Americans speak African American English, but linguists have estimated that approximately 80% of African Americans in the United States use African American English at least some of the time (Rickford, 1999; Smitherman, 1977). Occasionally, members of other cultural and ethnic groups are considered authentic speakers of African American English as well (Sweetland, 2002).

Like most ideologies, language ideologies have been shown to be most powerful when they are hegemonic, that is, when they are believed to be so natural, so unquestionably true, that their power is not recognized, even by those whom they position as subordinate (Eagleton, 1991; Fairclough, 1989). For instance, many people do not question the power inherent in the widely held belief that Standard English is the purest, most logical, and most grammatical form of the language (Milroy, 2001).

Language ideologies mediate social identities as well as institutional and cultural practices by marking speakers according to their use of language. As Bloome et al. (2003) noted,

What is at stake with regard to language ideologies is not just abstract conceptions of language but relationships among various cultural groups, the hierarchical valuing of a broad range of events and social, cultural, and language practices, and definitions of what it means to be a human being. (p. 208)

Language ideologies often include a hierarchical view of the dialects of a language that positions some speakers and members of particular social and cultural groups as more articulate, literate, or intelligent than others. Thus, the dialect speakers choose to use in a particular situation may identify them as members of a particular group and as possessing specific literate, cultural, and personal qualities.

For research in literacy learning, the theory of language ideologies provides an extension of Street's (1984) seminal distinction between *autonomous* and *ideological* theories of literacy. Street argued that research on reading and writing practices historically viewed literacy as autonomous and monolithic; as a neutral technology separated from social, historical, cultural, and institutional contexts; as carrying the same meaning in every situation; and as unquestionably beneficial to its users. Street argued instead for literacy research to be guided by an ideological model that assumes that (a) "the meaning of literacy depends on the social institutions in which it is embedded" (p. 8), (b) forms of literacy are always imbued with political and ideological significance

and thus cannot be seen as autonomous, and (c) many different literacies exist in any given context.

Like ideological theories of literacy, the concept of language ideologies brings to the forefront of educational research the multiple and contradictory ways in which language, language learning, and language users are defined and valued in particular contexts. It can reveal how assumptions about language, like assumptions about literacy, are tied to social institutions, cultural values, and other social practices. Thus, the study of language ideologies can help English language arts researchers understand two important relations: the relation between particular linguistic forms and social power, and the relation between language and literacy. In the classroom we studied, the particular linguistic forms that were considered correct within grammar instruction reflected the broader societal power structures that are maintained through privileging one dialect of English and the speakers of that dialect over other dialects and, thus, over other speakers. Similarly, the relation between language and literacy is explored in this study through the acknowledgement that literacy learning is understood *not only* as the mastery of specific kinds of reading and writing for particular purposes *but also* as reading and writing in and through a particular dialect of the English language. In this study, analyzing the tacit and explicit language ideologies found in grammar instruction is particularly salient because such instruction was directed at students who spoke African American English, a dialect of English that is often stigmatized (Beason, 2001; Cross, DeVane, & Jones, 2001; Hairston, 1981).

In this study, the concept of language ideologies is used as a methodological tool as well as an overarching theory. As a tool for investigation, the notion of language ideologies "allows for the integration of what, in more traditional terms, would seem to be different 'levels' of social phenomena (e.g., macropolitical and microintentional)" (Gal, 1998, p. 318). That is, assumptions about language and language users that have broad and powerful consequences at the societal and institutional levels are both reflected and created through everyday classroom discourse. Thus, using language ideology as a methodological tool provides a lens through which to view the implications of grammar instruction at the institutional, curricular, and classroom levels.

Recent studies of classroom discourse, particularly those studies that employ critical approaches to discourse (see Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, & Joseph, 2005, for a review of such studies), also informed our conceptual framework because of

their emphasis on the relations between classroom language, the construction of knowledge, and broader societal systems of power (Burbules, 2000; Gee & Green, 1998; Gutierrez, 1994; Nystrand, 1997). In our study, the classroom discourse surrounding Daily Language Practice both reflected and constructed social relationships and beliefs about language.

Literature review: Research on grammar instruction

In this article, we use the term *grammar instruction* to refer to the teaching of the sentence-level structures and conventions of written language to native speakers. We realize that this is not a linguistically accurate use of the term *grammar*; the *Oxford Dictionary of Linguistics* defines grammar as “any systematic account of the structure of a language” (p. 150). However, our use of the term *grammar* reflects the way in which it is used by K–12 educators and curricular materials in the United States to refer to the teaching of the sentence structure (syntax) and conventions (spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) of written Standard English. Rarely does *grammar instruction* include explanations of the structure of oral dialects of English, even though the joint International Reading Association [IRA]/NCTE Standards for the English Language Arts (1996) and state-level English language arts standards usually include guidelines for the teaching of speaking as well as writing and reading.

Educators and researchers have often summarized the research conducted on English language arts grammar instruction over the past 75 years in ways that oversimplify and overgeneralize findings and implications (Kolln, 1981). Conclusions from two seminal reviews of the research on grammar instruction—Braddock et al. (1963) and Hillocks (1986)—have been cited frequently to argue that research unequivocally demonstrates that grammar instruction does not improve students’ writing. However, other scholars (Elley, Barham, Lamb, & Wyllie, 1979; Kolln) have pointed out that such general indictments of grammar instruction misinterpret the research in a number of ways. Many of the studies analyzed by Braddock et al., for instance, did not include detailed descriptions of the kinds of grammar instruction investigated or the procedures used for data collection and analysis (Kolln). More importantly, both these older reviews of grammar instruction and a more recent one (Andrews et al., 2004) focused only on “traditional” grammar instruction (Andrews et al., p. iv), that is, parsing sentences and

learning labels for parts of sentences such as *relative clause* and *prepositional phrase*. As Hillocks noted, little research on the teaching of editing alone has been conducted, and the research that exists leads to no clear conclusions. The oft-quoted conclusions of these meta-analyses, then, apply only to particular kinds of grammar instruction and do not encompass editing activities such as Daily Language Practice.

The use of editing activities for the teaching of grammar and language, however, seems to have grown in popularity since Hillocks’s (1986) meta-analysis of grammar instruction appeared. Advocates of editing activities often contend that, in light of the evidence that traditional grammar instruction is ineffective, instruction on editing reduces the class time spent on grammar while still teaching students how to adhere to the conventions of written Standard English (NCTE, 1995; Weaver, 1996). Such editing activities, however, have rarely been studied, and the few studies of grammar instruction that address editing tasks have reported mixed results (Minchew & McGrath, 2001; Whittingham, 2003). Descriptions of individual literacy learners engaged in editing activities similar to Daily Language Practice suggest that the language ideologies inherent in these sorts of activities alienate students from academic language by presenting appropriate language as monolithic and distant from students’ own language use (Broughton & Fairbanks, 2002; Dyson, 2004).

In other scholarship on grammar instruction, Daily Language Practice and Daily Oral Language have sometimes been aligned with prominent calls to teach grammar in the context of reading and writing (NCTE, 1995; Weaver, 1996). Weaver described grammar in context as “teach[ing] various kinds of writing and editing skills when students need them to strengthen their writing” (p. 180). Weaver specifically mentioned Daily Oral Language as a program of grammar instruction that was in between traditional approaches to teaching grammar in isolation and constructivist approaches to teaching grammar in context and that had many positive qualities. Given the inclusion of editing activities in Weaver’s popular theory of teaching grammar in context, it is not surprising to us that some high school English curricular materials have claimed that Daily Language Practice and similar editing activities constitute contextualized grammar instruction (*The Language of Literature*, 2006). Indeed, in our study, Cindy decided to use Daily Language Practice in part because of its discussion in Weaver’s *Teaching Grammar in Context*, which she read during the summer preceding our study.

Research on grammar and language instruction for students who speak African American English

Because most of the students in our study were African American and spoke both Standard English and African American English, we were interested in how the Daily Language Practice aligned with research on effective grammar and language instruction for speakers of African American English and other stigmatized dialects. Baugh (1995) noted that although students who speak African American English are likely to understand standard dialects due to cultural and media inundation, that understanding “does not imply that AAE [African American English] students have the same academic advantage as do students who speak SE [Standard English] natively” (p. 91). Current research has demonstrated that gaps in academic achievement between African American and Caucasian students on assessments of literacy and college entrance rates persist (National Study Group for the Affirmative Development of Academic Ability, 2004). Research in educational linguistics has proposed that one way to narrow this gap may be to improve African American students’ command of Standard English (Delpit, 1995; Gee, 1996).

Existing research has suggested that students who speak African American English and other stigmatized dialects of English benefit from instruction that provides them with access to Standard English while valuing the other dialects they speak and giving students the tools to critique why some dialects of English are more valued than others (Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1992). Current studies have suggested three strategies for accomplishing this: (a) validating students’ home languages while adding other languages (or dialects) to their repertoires (Delpit; Ladson-Billings), (b) recognizing that language and identity are integrally intertwined and that students may experience conflicts between their home dialects and those dialects valued by school (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002; Gee, 1996), and (c) acknowledging that our society unfairly discriminates against some dialects and privileges others (Milroy, 2001; Wolfram, Adger, & Christian, 1999). Through these strategies, Delpit (1995) argued, “Today’s teachers can help economically disenfranchised students and students of color both to master the dominant discourses and transform them” (p. 163). All three of these strategies require the critical examination of pervasive language ideologies.

Methods

Ethnographic methods were used for this study in order to better understand how Cindy and her students represented language, dialects (such as written Standard English), and language learning. In other words, we were primarily concerned with understanding an *emic*, or insider, rather than *etic*, or outsider, perspective on language use and language learning, and studying naturally occurring talk (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995). We were also interested in the connections between beliefs about language and beliefs about students’ academic abilities and literacy learning needs (Saville-Troike, 1989).

We would further characterize our study as an *ethnography of communication* (Duff, 2002; Saville-Troike, 1989) because it is primarily concerned with (a) what is considered appropriate communication in a particular context, (b) oral communication and social interaction as critical sites of learning, and (c) “the ecologies of language learning, socialization and use” (Duff, p. 292). Ethnographies of communication describe the patterns of naturally occurring language use found in specific social situations such as classrooms (Mehan, 1982; Saville-Troike), and seek to understand how participants come to learn these acceptable forms of communication. In classroom contexts, Mehan recommended “studying the dynamic interactional work of participants that produces behavioral displays that are judged as ‘acceptable’ or ‘unacceptable,’ ‘correct’ or ‘incorrect,’ and...studying the interactional work that assembles aspects of schooling that become taken as ‘objective’” (p. 65).

Recent ethnographies of communication, perhaps influenced by Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1989; Rogers et al., 2005; Young, 2000), have often investigated the macrolevel social, cultural, and historical contexts that shape classroom discourse (Duff, 2002). Our study builds upon this recent trend in the ethnography of communication by examining the language ideologies constructed during the classroom discourse surrounding Daily Language Practice in relation to the language ideologies found in widely distributed texts such as curricular materials and standardized tests. We did not limit our data collection and analysis to the discourse within the classroom because the language and communication taught through the Daily Language Practice activity was explicitly framed by Cindy, the teacher, as preparation for discourse practices and communities outside of the classroom, such as high-stakes testing, college-level academic work, and successful employment.

The context of the study

The study was conducted in three of Cindy's 10th-grade English classes in an urban high school that we call Sherman High School. We call attention to the urban setting of the school because it shared many characteristics with urban schools nationwide: More than half of the students came from low-income backgrounds, the school consistently scored below the state average on standardized assessments, and almost all the students were racial minorities (in this case, African American), although the majority of the teachers were white. Sherman High School was located in a midwestern U.S. city of approximately 300,000 that can best be described as postindustrial urban (Gee, 1999), as service-sector jobs had been rapidly replacing unionized industrial jobs. Sherman High School enrolled approximately 750 students, approximately 91% of whom were African American, 7% white, .5% Latino, and .5% Asian. Fifty-nine percent of the students were classified as economically disadvantaged under NCLB, and 75% earned a high school diploma. In the year before our study, 40% of students scored proficient (passing) or higher in writing on the state's standardized assessment, and 22% scored proficient or higher in reading. Approximately 5% of the teachers at Sherman were African American; almost all other teachers were white.

Participants

The students

Approximately 55 students were enrolled in the three classes we studied; of those students, 31 agreed to participate in our research. Thirty of the participating students were African American and one was white. Drawing from our observations and transcriptions of students' social and academic talk in class, we noted that all participating students seemed to speak

both African American English and Standard English. All the African American students used prominent syntactic and morphological features of African American English consistently, though not at all times. The work of Lanehart (2002), Smitherman (1977), and Sweetland (2002) suggests that these prominent syntactic and morphological features include no plural *s*, no third-person singular *s*, no past tense and past-tense participle *-ed*, no copula (verb *to be*), multiple negation, and habitual use of *be* (see Table 1 for examples of these features drawn from participating students' speech and writing). The white student in the class sometimes used features of African American English in her speech, but less frequently than the African American students. Many African American students in the study positioned themselves as speakers of African American English by making comments such as "White boys be trying to sound like us sometimes." Most of the students lived in predominantly African American neighborhoods in close proximity to the school.

The teacher-researcher

At the time of our study, Cindy had been teaching for 20 years, 17 of them in urban schools. She had earned a teaching certificate in 1984 from a university in New Jersey, a master's degree in psychological studies from the same institution, and 48 doctoral-level credits in clinical psychology. As part of her training as an English teacher, Cindy had taken one undergraduate course in the structure and grammar of the English language. Cindy described herself as a lifelong learner, willing to try any new instructional strategy that promised to engage her students and increase their academic success. This is confirmed by her willingness to let Amanda into her classroom and to critically reflect on her own practice. She is committed to teaching in urban schools and has turned down teaching positions from more

TABLE 1
PROMINENT FEATURES OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ENGLISH

Feature	African American English	Standard English
No plural <i>s</i>	One of Leon's friend...	One of Leon's friends...
No third-person singular <i>s</i>	It sound all right to me.	It sounds all right to me.
No past tense and past tense participle <i>-ed</i>	Is that suppose to be large case?	Is that supposed to be large case?
No copula (verb <i>to be</i>)	Now what you all saying?	Now what are you all saying?
Multiple negation	I don't see no mistakes.	I don't see any mistakes.
Habitual use of <i>be</i>	I be writing so fast.	I write so fast.

affluent, suburban districts. Cindy prides herself on maintaining high academic expectations for all her students and was known among the students during the year of our study as one of the school's teachers with the strictest standards and expectations. Cindy's cultural and linguistic background differed from her students in some pertinent ways: She identifies as white, does not speak African American English, and lives in a predominantly white neighborhood outside of the city.

Cindy usually structured literacy activities in her 10th-grade English class as teacher-directed, interactive lectures or as individual seatwork. Students often individually wrote answers to questions from the textbook or textbook-related worksheets. Cindy usually worked with students individually during such activities, on the basis of her professional view that her students learned best with individual attention. She assigned readings from the school district's adopted textbook, *Elements of Literature*, and novels and plays that were on the district's official reading list, such as *To Kill a Mockingbird* (Lee, 1960), Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, and *The Wave* (Strasser, 1981). Writing assignments were varied, including nightly journal writing, formal literary analysis essays, poetry, and personal narratives. Finally, Cindy connected the literacy learning in the classroom to various kinds of performance art, arranging for students to see local plays and operas and, in one case, asking students to write poetry inspired by the music of Tupac Shakur, an influential hip-hop artist.

Cindy believed that it was her responsibility to teach students the communication standards articulated by her school district, that is, to speak and write in ways that her school district termed "business appropriate." She insisted that students use Standard English when speaking in her classroom and enforced this rule by repeating students' comments when they used features of African American English. For instance, when a student said, "I didn't say nothing," Cindy repeated, "I didn't say *nothing*?" until the student said, "I didn't say *anything*." Throughout the school year, Cindy expressed her interest in trying to integrate grammar instruction with the reading and writing students were doing in her class, but she felt unable to do so because of the pressure to prepare students for the grammar and language portions of standardized tests.

The university researchers

Amanda is an assistant professor at a research university and a former teacher of middle and high school English and college-level writing. Her interest

in grammar instruction is motivated in part by her own experiences and frustrations teaching this topic in a variety of school contexts including urban, suburban, and international secondary schools and public universities. Brian is a doctoral student with a background in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Like Cindy, Amanda and Brian consider themselves white, do not speak African American English, and live in predominantly white neighborhoods. In other words, the authors neither identify as, nor were seen as, insiders in the students' out-of-school cultural, linguistic, and social worlds.

Description of the collaboration between the authors

Amanda and Cindy met when Cindy was recommended by a colleague who was affiliated with the local chapter of the National Writing Project as an enthusiastic, experienced teacher. Cindy expressed interest in Amanda's desire to study the teaching of grammar and agreed to participate in the study because she was interested in learning more effective approaches to grammar instruction.

When data collection began, Cindy and Amanda were still establishing a professional and personal relationship. Amanda provided Cindy with a copy of Constance Weaver's *Teaching Grammar in Context* (1996) to read over the summer. In late August, Cindy and Amanda met to discuss the book and think of ways Cindy could integrate grammar instruction with other literacy activities in her 10th-grade English classes. After this meeting, Cindy chose to integrate Daily Language Practice into her instruction. This decision was based on a number of factors: her sense that the activity was successful when she used it in New Jersey high schools; Amanda's interest in grammar instruction; and Weaver's analysis of Daily Language Practice, as discussed in our literature review.

During the school year, Amanda and Cindy talked informally every day that Amanda observed classes, and met more formally approximately once every eight weeks to talk about grammar instruction, students, and student learning. During these meetings, Amanda shared some suggestions about Daily Language Practice and initial findings with Cindy, such as the researchers' analyses of student writing. However, because the ethnography of communication focuses on observing naturally occurring, everyday talk without researcher intervention (Duff, 2002), and because little research existed on the effectiveness of Daily Language Practice, Amanda did not intervene in the activity, and she and Cindy did not

analyze the language ideologies constructed through the activity until after the school year had ended.

Thus, our collaborative analysis of the Daily Language Practice began after the yearlong ethnographic study. At this point, Amanda and Brian had completed their preliminary analyses of the field notes, of salient transcripts of classroom discourse, and of quantitative data from timed writing and multiple-choice assessments at the beginning and end of the year, all of which are described in more detail in the subsequent section on data collection. The quantitative data, as we show in the results section, suggested that students' abilities to edit their own writing and to master multiple-choice editing tasks such as those tasks found on most state assessments did not improve significantly over the school year. These data led to discussions among the authors about why Daily Language Practice did not seem to provide productive learning opportunities for the students and led to our collaborative analyses of the data.

Because ethnographic research posits the researcher as a lens through which data are filtered, we think it is important to share our own assumptions about language. As Milroy (2001) pointed out, even the characteristics of language that linguists view as facts need to be acknowledged as ideologies, not essential truths about language. Amanda's and Brian's beliefs about language are influenced by their membership in academic and research communities and are drawn primarily from research in literacy and linguistics. They view language as varied across contexts and view all dialects as equally grammatical. At the same time, they believe that literacy educators are obligated to teach students the grammar and conventions of oral and written Standard English and the social contexts in which using these dialects is advantageous.

Cindy's assumptions about language are similar in many ways, but more influenced by practical considerations as she prepares high school students for college-level academic work and fulfilling employment. Thus, she is particularly concerned with teaching her students the "codes of power" (Delpit, 1988, p. 293) that are used in mainstream professional, civic, and academic contexts. She also believes that appropriate language use is context dependent, but believes that stigmatized dialects of English, such as African American English, are appropriate only in informal, social contexts and not appropriate in school.

Data collection

Following the methods of longitudinal observation and collection of classroom discourse data associated with the ethnography of communication (Duff,

2002; Mehan, 1982), Amanda and a research assistant, Megan, were participant-observers in Cindy's 10th-grade English classes approximately three times a week for the entire school year, from August to June. In sum, Amanda and Megan observed, audiotaped, or videotaped 133 different occurrences of the Daily Language Practice activity and observed Cindy's classes on 79 different days. They collected 119 audio recordings and 106 video recordings of the Daily Language Practice. Amanda and Megan also collected curricular materials and produced field notes during each observation. Both descriptive and analytical field notes (see Emerson et al., 1995) were taken on laptop computers and then revised and expanded when the researchers left the school.

A number of other data sources provided triangulation for our analyses of classroom observations and recordings: curricular materials; state and district standards for language and literacy; audiotapes of six meetings between Amanda and Cindy that took place throughout the school year; audiotaped individual interviews of 11 students conducted by Amanda (see Appendix B for the interview protocol); all student writing longer than a sentence; and students' grades and attendance records. In addition, at the beginning and at the end of the school year, we gave the students a timed writing task (see Appendix C for the writing prompts) and a multiple-choice written Standard English editing test similar to those tasks found on the state assessment (see Appendix D for sample items) in order to measure changes in students' use and editing of written Standard English. Because there is no generally accepted instrument used to measure students' understanding of grammar or the effects of grammar instruction (see the studies reviewed in Andrews et al., 2004; Hillocks, 1986; Weaver, 1996), we chose to model the pre- and posttests on existing standardized assessments so that they would address Cindy's concern with students' performance on high-stakes tests. We also chose to administer two kinds of pre- and posttests, student-generated writing and multiple-choice tasks, in order to measure changes in students' understanding of written Standard English grammar and conventions in multiple ways. On the writing task, we measured the frequency of written Standard English grammar and conventions errors in students' academic writing because reducing errors in academic writing is a long-standing goal of K-12 grammar instruction and was one of Cindy's goals. We used the pre- and posttests to provide secondary evidence for our claims concerning the learning opportunities that Daily Language Practice provided. We report the results of these pre- and posttests at the end of our results section.

Data analysis

The initial stages of data analysis were ongoing throughout the data collection and analysis phases, following the recursive methods of ethnography and the ethnography of communication (see Emerson et al., 1995). We identified emergent themes in our field notes and transcriptions of classroom discourse, used these themes to guide data collection, and then revised the themes as new data were collected. The preliminary coding of the Daily Language Practice data focused on the structure of the activity, the grammar topics covered by the activity, the students' participation, and the assumptions about language imbedded in the discourse surrounding the activity. It was at this preliminary stage that Amanda and Brian began to use the theory of language ideologies to analyze how grammar and language were being represented during Daily Language Practice.

In the second coding phase, which occurred after the end of the study, Amanda and Brian closely analyzed the classroom discourse of 27 Daily Language Practice activities that spanned the entire school year and had been observed, videotaped, and transcribed in detail. Because they found that the patterns of classroom discourse surrounding the Daily Language Practice varied little across the daily enactments of the activity, Amanda and Brian transcribed a representative sample of 27 Daily Language Practice activities rather than all of the videotaped data. Cindy independently analyzed three transcripts and videotapes of Daily Language Practice activities, and then all three researchers shared their analyses.

Using our more detailed and representative data set of transcripts, we collaboratively coded evidence of language ideologies along two axes: (a) the

content of the language ideologies, and (b) the *sources* of the language ideologies. To identify the *content* of each language ideology, we first coded the data set for all distinct assumptions about language use and language learning and then condensed them into eight core language ideologies that addressed assumptions about the nature of language, dialects of English, and grammar instruction (see Table 2). We included the language ideologies reflected in students' talk although the language ideologies implied by the curriculum and expressed by the teacher, Cindy, were more prevalent and dominant in our data.

We then identified the apparent *sources* of the language ideologies that emerged during Daily Language Practice: (a) state and district standards and standardized tests, (b) curricular materials, (c) the activity structure, (d) teacher talk, and (e) student talk. These sources led us to broaden our data analysis to the academic standards, curricular materials, and standardized tests that informed the Daily Language Practice in Cindy's class and to examine the *intertextuality* (Bloome, 1994; Fairclough, 1995) of the language ideologies we had identified. By *intertextuality*, we mean a text's relation to other texts, a relation that is often evidenced in a text's explicit references to other texts, use of other texts, or use of specific features of other texts, such as important vocabulary. In our study, we were interested in how the language ideologies reflected in texts such as state standards were referenced in other texts, such as Cindy's talk in class or the Daily Language Practice curricular materials.

In order to understand the relations between the language ideologies that emerged from each of the five sources we identified, we analyzed salient discourse features of related written and oral texts in our data,

TABLE 2
CODING CATEGORIES FOR THE LANGUAGE IDEOLOGIES IN DAILY LANGUAGE PRACTICE

The nature of language and language use

1. Acceptable language is determined prescriptively; authorities outside of a specific discourse community make and enforce rules for how to use language properly within that community.
2. Form and function (that is, structure and meaning) of language are not connected.

Dialects of English

3. Acceptable English language is monolithic; oral and written dialects have the same ideal structure and conventions; there is one "correct" or "proper" dialect; all other dialects are "incorrect" or "slang."
4. Written Standard English is monolithic; there is one "correct" way to express each idea in written Standard English.
5. There are a number of dialects of English; each is appropriate for specific contexts and purposes.

Grammar/language instruction

6. The purpose of grammar instruction is to prepare for standardized testing.
7. Grammar instruction is the same as editing written Standard English and labeling parts of speech.
8. Grammar instruction should be dialogic (Bakhtin, 2004), positioning learners as knowledgeable language users within discussions about language use and meaning.

including classroom discourse. These discourse features included *framing*, *omissions*, *presuppositions*, *recurring vocabulary*, *text organization*, and *the structure of classroom discourse*. *Framing* refers to the manner in which a topic is represented through emphasis or selection in such a way as to promote a particular interpretation or evaluation (Huckin, 1995). In our study, the framing or representation of acceptable English language was particularly salient because we were examining assumptions about language. Related to framing are the discourse features termed *omissions* and *presuppositions* (Huckin), places in texts where information is left out or assumed, respectively. In our study, a presupposition found in both the Daily Language Practice curricular materials and state standards was that the grammar of oral and written Standard English was the same. In addition, *recurring vocabulary* (Fairclough, 1989) such as the terms *proper*, *correct*, and *incorrect* appeared across many of the oral and written texts in our data set. The discourse feature of *text organization* (Fairclough) demonstrated how elements of written and oral texts were sequenced and connected in our data set. Finally, *the structure of classroom discourse* (Gutierrez, 1994) helped us understand the patterns of acceptable interaction during the Daily Language Practice and the assumptions about acceptable language that undergirded those patterns.

Results

This section has three parts, each of which corresponds to one of our three research questions and to the particular sources of the language ideologies expressed through Daily Language Practice. The first part of this section examines the language ideologies represented in the language of the standardized tests, state standards, and curricular materials that informed the activity. The second part analyzes the language ideologies reflected through the structure of the classroom discourse that surrounded the Daily Language Practice activity. The third part examines the competing language ideologies expressed by the teacher, Cindy, and her students through the classroom discourse surrounding the Daily Language Practice on one particular day.

Language ideologies in state standards, standardized tests, and curricular materials

During the year of our study, the requirements of NCLB federal legislation seemed to strengthen

the connection between the assumptions about language embedded in the state standards, in national and state-level standardized assessments, and in the Daily Language Practice activity. The pressure on Cindy to prepare her students for standardized tests in order to raise their scores to meet the academic progress requirements of NCLB increased throughout the school year. She was often reminded by the school literacy coach and other school administrators that any activity that she used in class had to align with the state standards and, more importantly, with those standards and skills that would appear on the state assessments.

Cindy later described the school year in which we conducted our study as the beginning of “the most frustrating time in all my years teaching” because of the pressure to prepare students for standardized tests, the mandate that she follow the district’s official curriculum, and the attendant loss of professional independence. Cindy also felt torn between spending her limited instructional time on standardized test preparation, on teaching the official curriculum (including a commercial, computer-based literacy program), and on “beginning where students are.” She noted, for instance, that students often came to her class below a sixth-grade reading level, but the official curriculum left little room or time for modifying reading assignments and addressing students’ individual needs.

State standards

The state-level “Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening” Cindy was expected to follow included two sections on skills related to grammar and language: One section focused on editing skills; the other section focused on knowledge about the English language. We do not analyze in detail the second group of language-related standards because we never witnessed these standards referred to in district or school documents, in standardized assessments, or in English teachers’ and literacy coaches’ discussions of topics to be covered during instruction.

The section of the standards on editing, however, was tied to specific items on the state’s standardized assessment. This section was located under the broad category “Quality of Writing” and was entitled “Edit writing using the conventions of language.” It included the following subpoints:

- Spell all words correctly.
- Use capital letters correctly.

- Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
- Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions, and interjections properly.
- Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory, and imperative).

A number of discursive features of this text suggest that it posited the English language as monolithic, or as having just one appropriate form. First, the use of the term *language* in the title of the editing section—"editing writing using the conventions of language"—suggests that there is just one set of conventions for all dialects of the English language; no modifier limits these conventions to just formal written language, although research demonstrates that many of the conventions of written Standard English are unique (Speicher & Bielanski, 2000). The recurring words *use* and *correctly* imply that there is only one way to use punctuation and parts of speech in the English language correctly, reinforcing the representation of appropriate English language as monolithic. The repetition of the word *correctly* also suggests a prescriptive view of language learning, that is, the view that language users must be taught by an authority how to use nouns and verbs "properly" and that the goal of language learning is correctness rather than effectiveness. It is difficult to know what the standards meant by using nouns, verbs, and other categories of words "properly" because there are many possible ways to use words in different combinations in speech, in writing, and in various dialects, including written Standard English. However, the state standards do not represent language use in terms of effectiveness, choice, or meaning-making as current theories of literacy do (IRA/NCTE, 1996; Lu, 2004; Luke, 2004; New London Group, 1996).

What is also salient in the representation of language in the state standards is what is omitted. The language skills that the state insisted students learn did not include using language that is appropriate for specific audiences or purposes or understanding the language choices others make. Such goals, articulated in the IRA/NCTE standards, were excluded from the state standards, which represented editing for the conventions of a specific dialect—written Standard English—as the only goal of grammar and language instruction.

Standardized assessments

Explicit and implicit intertextual links between the state standards and assessments are reflected

through recurring vocabulary and phrases, the framing of grammar and language learning, and the portrayal of the English language as monolithic. The state assessments for which Cindy was required to prepare her students tested grammar and language skills through the "conventions" category of the rubric for the timed writing task and through multiple-choice editing tasks. In the rubric, connections to the state standards were explicit: The writing prompt reminded students to "check for capitalization, spelling, sentence structure, punctuation, and usage errors," repeating many of the categories of "correct" language use found in the state standards.

The multiple-choice section of the test typically included items on sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, and other conventions listed in the standards, and asked students to edit sentences that contained errors in written Standard English. The multiple-choice format of the editing section reflected a monolithic view of written Standard English because each test question was represented as having only one possible solution rather than a variety of appropriate transformations. In addition, students could not explain their answers within the multiple-choice format, as they could, for instance, within parts of the math portion of the state assessment. The omission of explanations implies that determining appropriate written Standard English language use is not a complex problem-solving activity, but rather a reflection of factual knowledge.

Daily Language Practice curricular materials

The Daily Language Practice activity that we analyze in this article was based on sentences taken from a 1999 Prentice Hall Teaching Resources booklet entitled "Daily Language Practice," which accompanied the publisher's Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes literature series. Cindy chose to use this booklet rather than the comparable materials that came with the literature textbook she was using because she was more familiar with it. The format, sequencing, and grammar and usage concepts covered in the 1999 Daily Language Practice booklet are similar to current Daily Language Practice and Daily Oral Language curricular materials (*Daily Oral Language*, 2006; *Elements of Literature: Daily Oral Grammar*, 2005).

The language ideologies embedded in the Daily Language Practice booklet predominantly represent language as monolithic and language form as divorced from meaning. The cover of the booklet describes Daily Language Practice as "Brief daily activities to build skill in grammar, usage and mechanics."

The booklet includes a table of contents organized by week ("Week 1, Week 2, ..."), a one-and-a-half-page introduction, and two practice sentences for each day for 36 weeks. The introduction to the booklet claims,

The middle and high school years are a crucial period for the development of students' skills in all of the language arts. As a result, students need programs that provide individual and cooperative practice in reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. Prentice Hall's *Daily Language Practice* offers just such a framework for meaningful language arts practice. While focusing on grammar, mechanics, and usage skills, the program provides a fresh point of departure from the tedious, time-consuming drills of the past. Using *Daily Language Practice* for just a few minutes a day helps you provide your students with meaningful routines that ensure continuous progress. In effect, *Daily Language Practice* offers you a full toolbox for developing reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.... What a natural, painless way for students to master the fundamentals of standard written English as they experience the rich literature of our varied culture! (From "Daily Language Practice" [Timeless Voices, Timeless Themes], © 1999, Prentice Hall. Used by permission, p. 3)

In this introduction, *Daily Language Practice* is framed repeatedly (in four out of the seven sentences above) as providing practice in all of the language arts—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—through its focus on "grammar, mechanics, and usage" (sentence 4). The repeated mention of writing and speaking suggests that editing written sentences improves the grammar and usage of students' written *and* oral language. Although the final sentence in the previous excerpt portrays *Daily Language Practice* as an activity that teaches students a specific dialect of English—"standard written English"—the many other references to speaking skills as well as the title of the activity (and booklet)—*Daily Language Practice*—imply, just as the wording of the state standards do, that the activity will improve students' use of the English language in general rather than just one specific dialect of it. Thus, this excerpt promotes the misconception that the grammatical structures and conventions of written Standard English and spoken Standard English are the same, when research has suggested that students' literacy improves when differences between the grammar of oral and written dialects of English, and the reasons for these differences, are explicitly taught (Krauthamer, 1999; Wheeler & Swords, 2004; Wolfram et al., 1999).

As in the state standards and assessments, the *Daily Language Practice* booklet not only represents the English language as monolithic but also portrays the specific dialect of written Standard English as

having merely one ideal or correct form. This representation of language can be seen in the booklet's textual organization and omissions, particularly in the sentences that students were expected to edit and the possible answers to those sentences. In the booklet, practice sentences are followed by only one possible transformation of each sentence into acceptable written Standard English rather than a range of choices. For instance, according to the booklet, the sentences "Mathilde loses the necklace. The Loisels must borrow a huge sum of money to buy a replacement" should be changed to "*When* Mathilde loses the necklace, the Loisels must borrow a huge sum of money to buy a replacement" (p. 33). In the preceding sentence and elsewhere, we have italicized the elements of the practice sentences that should be changed according to the booklet and those sentence elements that Cindy's students changed during the *Daily Language Practice* activity. Despite the fact that the original Mathilde sentences contain no error, it is noteworthy that the booklet omits the many other possible ways to transform these sentences into appropriate written Standard English. Students could transform the sentences by using a subordinating conjunction, a coordinating conjunction, or a semicolon after *necklace* or inverting the order of the clauses, such as in the sentence, "The Loisels must borrow a huge sum of money to buy a replacement after Mathilde loses the necklace." However, none of these possibilities are included as solutions in the *Daily Language Practice* booklet.

The list of "Skills Practiced" by students when they transform the sentence, which appears to the left of each practice sentence, also implies that there is only one appropriate version of the Mathilde sentences in written Standard English. The booklet lists the skill practiced in the sentences above as "use of subordinating conjunction to combine sentences," omitting other possible ways to combine the practice sentences. Through this omission, the booklet frames other appropriate ways to transform the sentences into written Standard English as incorrect, potentially leading to confusion for students when their appropriate transformations are rejected because they do not match the answers in the booklet. Students expressed this kind of confusion multiple times during our observations of the *Daily Language Practice* activities.

Including many possible transformations for the sentences in the *Daily Language Practice* booklet would, on the other hand, support a view of appropriate written Standard English as multifaceted, linked to subtle changes in meaning, and determined by context and purpose (Bakhtin, 2004; Halliday, 2003). Accepting multiple appropriate transforma-

tions of the practice sentences could help students to learn various ways of expressing an idea in written Standard English and constructing more complex and effective sentences rather than merely mastering one correct form. It could also help students understand the relation between language form and meaning as they consider how slight changes in sentence structure can affect the literal and implied meanings of sentences (Bakhtin; Halliday).

However, the practice sentences in the Daily Language Practice booklet represent language form as disconnected from meaning; the booklet presents practice sentences in isolation rather than as parts of entire texts with specific audiences and purposes, and alters sentences in the official answers without acknowledging how the alterations change the literal and implied meanings of the sentences. For instance, the practice sentence that reads, "On some islands traditional African religions *are practiced*" should, according to the booklet, be changed to active voice: "On some islands *people practice* traditional African religions" (p. 21). As Bakhtin (2004), Halliday (2002), and Schleppegrell (2001) noted, changes of form such as changing a verb from passive to active ("are practiced" to "practice") and adding a subject ("people") can significantly alter the function of the sentence. Bakhtin (2004) and Schleppegrell, Achugar, and Oteíza (2004) demonstrated how students learn a greater control of conventions and of academic writing when they understand how a minor change in grammatical structure can affect the meaning, emphasis, and implication of a sentence and why particular grammatical forms, such as the passive voice, are used in specific kinds of texts for specific goals.

In Cindy's classes, the students' attempts to transform the sentence about African religions demonstrated how the separation of language form and meaning can lead to misinterpretations of the exact meanings conveyed by particular sentences. Many students changed the sentence "On some islands traditional African religions *are practiced*" to "On some islands African people practice traditional religions," changing the placement of the word "African" so that it described the people rather than the religions. By making this change, the students transformed the meaning of the sentence significantly from the original. The significance of this change became more apparent to us when we examined the surrounding practice sentences in the Daily Language Practice booklet, sentences the students did not see, but which made it clear that the topic of this group of practice sentences was religion in the Caribbean, not in Africa.

This example suggests that language ideologies that disassociate meaning from language form can hinder students' awareness of subtle changes in the meaning of texts. Separating language form and meaning could thus weaken efforts to teach high school students to be more careful readers, attune to the distinct literal and implied meanings conveyed by the wording of sentences such as "On some islands traditional African religions are practiced" and "On some islands African people practice traditional religions." Overall, the ideology of language reflected in this example and in other Daily Language Practice sentences could be summarized as follows: No matter what the intended meaning or purpose of a sentence, it has only one possible and correct form in English.

The ideology that appropriate English language has only one form was also implied in the way the curricular materials framed features of oral dialects and stigmatized dialects. Some practice sentences included syntactic features of oral dialects of English, such as object pronouns used as subjects ("him and Juliet see each other," p. 38), contractions, and sentence fragments. Many sentences included syntactic features of African American English such as the use of multiple negation ("Holmes hardly spent no time with Spaulding," p. 12) and no third-person singular -s on verbs. The Daily Language Practice curriculum materials left these features unmarked as appropriate features of everyday oral dialects and marked them as forms that were wrong. Thus, particularly because the Daily Language Practice booklet claimed that it could improve students' speaking skills, it portrayed these particular grammatical features and the dialects they represented as incorrect language rather than as appropriate for particular dialects of English and particular situations.

Finally, the curricular materials represented the Daily Language Practice as a time-saving activity, a claim that contributed to Cindy's decision to implement it. The excerpt from the Daily Language Practice booklet presented at the beginning of this section emphasizes that the activity is "brief," "a fresh point of departure from the tedious, time-consuming drills of the past," and designed to be used "for just a few minutes a day." Given the pressures on Cindy to fit more and more material into her instructional time, the Daily Language Practice suited her need for grammar instruction that was quick but would prepare students for standardized tests. The Daily Language Practice reflected current minimalist approaches to grammar instruction, in which grammar instruction takes up as little class time as possible and only teaches students to adhere

to conventions of written Standard English (Atwell, 1998; NCTE, 1995; Noguchi, 1991; Weaver, 1996). We now turn to the implementation of the Daily Language Practice activity in Cindy's classes to examine how the language ideologies expressed in the Daily Language Practice curricular materials were reflected and contested through classroom discourse during grammar instruction.

Language ideologies reflected through the structure of classroom discourse surrounding Daily Language Practice

This section of our analysis focuses on the structure of the classroom discourse surrounding the Daily Language Practice activity in order to demonstrate the sequence and patterns of typical interactions during the Daily Language Practice and the assumptions about acceptable language implied through those patterns. Revealing the *patterns* of acceptable communication in a particular classroom context is a defining goal of ethnographies of communication because these patterns are thought to reflect and create community beliefs and values, including beliefs about language (Mehan, 1982).

The way Cindy sequenced the tasks and classroom discourse surrounding the Daily Language Practice was the same in each of our 27 transcribed videotapes. Before the students walked into the class, Cindy wrote the Daily Language Practice sentence on the chalkboard. After the students were seated, she asked that they work individually on transforming the sentence while she took attendance and did other mandatory clerical work. After approximately five minutes, Cindy called on a particular student to go to the chalkboard to make the needed changes in the sentence while the other students watched. Approximately three months into the school year, Amanda and Cindy discussed asking the students why they made their changes, and Cindy began to do so. However, many times the students would avoid explaining their answers by responding "educated guess," mimicking a phrase that Cindy often used.

After asking the student why he or she made particular changes to the sentence, Cindy generally called on another student to assess what the prior student had done, asking, "Is she correct?" If the student said, "No," then she was told to go to the chalkboard and "correct" the sentence. If the student answered, "Yes," and was mistaken, then Cindy said, "You are incorrect." The pattern of Cindy calling a student to the board, the student changing the sen-

tence, another student evaluating the first student, and Cindy evaluating the second student's evaluation continued until the sentence was changed appropriately or until Cindy thought that the activity was taking up too much class time. The activity ended with Cindy explaining the changes to the class.

At times the classroom discourse surrounding Daily Language Practice diverted slightly from this pattern. Sometimes Cindy held side conversations with students about homework or other individual issues while another student altered the Daily Language Practice sentence on the board. Occasionally we observed students helping each other transform the practice sentence, but this collaboration occurred only eight times for less than 15 seconds each within our data set of 27 videotaped Daily Language Practice activities. One of these occurrences appears in the transcript at the outset of this article when Richard and Ebony try to help Aaron. As the year progressed, Cindy more often assisted students verbally as they tried to figure out how to change the sentence into written Standard English, saying things like "Almost" and "There's one more mistake." At the same time, during meetings with Amanda, Cindy expressed concerns with helping students too much during the activity because she would not be able to help them answer the editing questions when they took the state assessment.

Cindy was also aware of time limitations and the need to move beyond the opening activity to other literacy instruction. Daily Language Practice, in fact, proved to be a significant part of the literacy instruction students received because it often took up a considerable amount of time—much longer than the curricular materials implied or than Cindy expected. The length of the Daily Language Practice activity, as measured by the 27 transcribed videotapes of the Daily Language Practice lessons, varied from 8 to 20 minutes during our observations, including the time students were given at the beginning of class to work individually on the given sentence. The average length of the activity was approximately 12 minutes or one fourth of the class time.

As our description of the typical structure of the Daily Language Practice demonstrates, the classroom discourse surrounding the activity typically followed a traditional Teacher Initiation–Student Response–Teacher Evaluation (IRE) turn-taking pattern (Wells, 1993), a pattern of classroom discourse that reinforced the language ideologies found in state standards and assessments and also positioned Cindy as the only authority in the class on appropriate language use. Classroom discourse during the Daily Language Practice followed the IRE pattern in all of

the transcribed videotapes except during the eight short student discussions described previously. In the Daily Language Practice, the IRE discourse structure matched the goals of the activity well. Cindy's initiation of topics and students' short responses mirrored the multiple-choice format of the state assessment tests, which required that students respond immediately and briefly to any grammar/editing topic that was given to them. Each item on the test had only one right answer, and thus students' knowledge about grammar and language could be assessed immediately as either right or wrong. This dichotomous view of language was reflected in the recurring language of Cindy's evaluation of students as either "correct" or "incorrect."

The IRE structure of the activity also reinforced the view that language learning is prescriptive, or regulated by rules and authorities. Although Cindy meant for students' evaluation of one another to serve as a kind of peer editing activity, the students' evaluations of their classmates were always followed by Cindy's evaluations of their evaluations, and thus positioned her as the ultimate authority on language. The participation structure of the activity, then, reinforced the language ideologies found in the standardized tests: Language is monolithic and has just one correct form, and language use is prescriptive, governed by rules that are determined and enforced by authorities. Furthermore, the ritualized structure of the Daily Language Practice activity depicted these language ideologies as unquestionable truths. Ritualized discursive practices can wield tremendous ideological power because they provide a *metatext* that frames an activity as both institutionally sanctioned and nonnegotiable in its structure and its presentation of language (Silverstein, 1998). Thus, the repetitive structure of the Daily Language Practice activity made the language ideologies it presented even more hegemonic and difficult to question.

Teacher and student talk during a Daily Language Practice activity

We now focus on the classroom discourse surrounding one episode of the Daily Language Practice activity selected from our corpus of 27 analyzed, transcribed video recordings. In our study, the Daily Language Practice curricular materials reflect some of the assumptions about language that shaped grammar instruction in Cindy's classes, but a close examination of student and teacher talk surrounding the Daily Language Practice provides a more nuanced picture of

the beliefs about language expressed and contested by Cindy and her students through the activity.

We chose this example of the Daily Language Practice activity to present in detail for three reasons: (a) it occurred near the end of the school year and therefore reflects a well-established structure of classroom discourse and relationship between the teacher and students, (b) it is representative of the classroom discourse we observed throughout the school year, and (c) it includes representative examples of students' contesting the dominant language ideologies reflected in the activity. Although we present a detailed analysis of one Daily Language Practice episode in this section, we link our analysis of this episode to the ideological and interactive patterns that emerged across our data sources.

On June 1, Cindy wrote the following sentences on the chalkboard for the Daily Language Practice: "Romeo sneaks into the *Capulets* party. *Him* and Juliet see each other and fall in love." Harry, as he often did, volunteered to edit the sentences. He stood at the board for approximately 15 seconds, looking at the sentence, chalk in hand. (See Appendix A for transcript conventions.)

Excerpt 1.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| 1 Harry: | I don't know what this is (<i>erasing the C in Capulets and writing a lowercase c so it reads capulets</i>) so I'm gonna lowercase that. |
| 2 Cindy: | You didn't study the Montagues and the Capulets last year? (<i>surprised tone</i>) |
| 3 Harry: | I don't know. I forget. (<i>as he walks back to seat</i>) |
| 4 Miesha: | I did. (<i>in a sing-song voice</i>) |
| 5 Cindy: | Did you study Romeo and Juliet last year? |
| 6 Harry: | Uh, I don't know. I forget. |
| 7 Cindy: | 'K, Romeo sneaks into the capulets party lowercase <i>c</i> . H—Harry why did you put that as a lowercase <i>c</i> ? 6-second pause. |
| 8 Harry: | Hmm? (<i>not looking at Cindy—looking at a paper on his desk</i>) |
| 9 Cindy: | Why did you put that as a lowercase <i>c</i> ? (<i>more slowly</i>) |
| 10 Harry: | I don't know what it is. |
| 11 Cindy: | The C—Capulet is a family. The Jones. The Hastings. The Werners. |
| 12 Harry: | The Werners. (<i>softly</i>) |
| 13 Cindy: | Dionna, is he correct? |
| 14 Harry: | Am I correct? (<i>softly, in a mocking tone</i>) |
| 15 Dionna: | No. (<i>softly</i>) |
| 16 Cindy: | Dionna, is he correct? |
| 17 Student: | [xx] |
| 18 Cindy: | You mean an apostrophe? |
| 19 Miesha: | [xx] Capulets [xx] |

- 20 Cindy: Dionna, is he correct? (*Dionna shakes her head.*) Please go to the board.
- 21 Student: I want to go to the board.
- 22 Student: Oh, yeah, yeah, he's right.
- 23 Miesha: Oooohhhhh. (*laughs*)
- 24 Dionna: (*walks to chalkboard, looks for something*) You got an eraser?
- 25 Cindy: Do you got?
- 26 Dionna: Do you have? (*smiling*)
- 27 Miesha: Do you got? (*mocking tone*)
- Dionna erases the lowercase c in capulets and adds an uppercase C to make Capulets and inserts an apostrophe to make Capulet's.*
- 28 Miesha: Dionna. (*whispering*)
- 29 Dionna: Huh?
- 30 Ali: You stole my answer.
- Dionna smiles and walks back to her seat.*
- 31 Cindy: OK, Dionna, you put a capital letter C, why?
- 32 Dionna: [Uh, educated guess. (*said while Miesha and other students talk*)]
- 33 Cindy: Educated guess? Why did you put the apostrophe?
- 34 Harry: 'Cause she's a [xx] (*under his breath*)
- 35 Dionna: Oh uh, I don't know. [Educated guess.]
- 36 Cindy: Pardon me?
- 37 Dionna: Educated guess. I [put uh
- 38 Cindy: [Another educated guess
- 39 Dionna: (*softly*) I put the C because it's, uh [name.
- 40 Cindy: [Dan, you need to get rid of what's in your mouth.
- 41 Dionna: It's [a name.
- 42 Cindy: [Tania, is she correct?
- 43 Tania: Yes.
- 44 Cindy: Tania, you are incorrect. Ali, go to the board.

Several discursive elements found in the excerpt above demonstrate that the talk surrounding the Daily Language Practice activity represented learning about grammar and language as prescriptive. The traditional IRE structure positioned Cindy as the manager of speaking rights and the only legitimate initiator of topics of conversation. Cindy initiates topics or selects students to participate in the activity in turns 2, 5, 7, 9, 13, 16, 18, 20, 25, 31, 33, 40, 42, and 44. In other places in the excerpt, students' attempts to bring new topics to the floor or to self-nominate for work at the board are not recognized. For instance, in turn 1, Harry's attempt to bring a new topic to the conversational floor (the meaning of *Capulet*) is not taken up until turn 11. In turn 21, a student's bid to go to the chalkboard does not garner

a response, and in turn 22, another student's commentary on Harry's work is not recognized. In the excerpt above, then, the students had few opportunities to take up positions as experts on language by exploring topics in depth, building on what other students have said, or raising topics that had not been initiated by the teacher. Thus the structure of the classroom discourse reinforced the ideology that language learning is prescriptive rather than dialogic and implied that students did not possess valuable linguistic resources that might inform their understanding of language use in academic contexts.

Another ideology of language reflected through the discourse surrounding the activity was that language form is independent of meaning. In turn 1, Harry explains, "I don't know what this is [referring to the word *Capulets*] so I'm gonna lowercase that." Harry's explanation of the change he is making reveals the way in which language form and meaning interrelate; he cannot edit the sentence appropriately without knowing the meaning of *Capulets*. However, Cindy does not address the connection between language form and meaning until after Harry has expressed his lack of knowledge of the meaning of the word four times (turns 1, 3, 6, 10). In retrospect, Cindy interpreted her response to Harry as reflective of her concern with covering the literary content of her curriculum. Because *Romeo and Juliet* was considered a core text in ninth-grade English at Sherman High School, Cindy wanted and needed to know if the students had actually read it the previous year. But because the topic of this stretch of classroom discourse excluded Harry's confusion over the meaning of the word *Capulets*, it implied that grammatical form and usage are separate from meaning.

Cindy's repeated use of the terms *correct* and *incorrect* in this excerpt (turns 13, 16, 20, 42, and 44) reflects the monolithic view of written Standard English presented in the curricular materials and standardized tests. In this excerpt and in our other transcribed video data, either students located and changed *all* of the nonconventional forms in the Daily Language Practice sentence(s) or they were considered incorrect. This dichotomous view of language and language learning was similar to the way that students were evaluated on the multiple-choice editing questions on the state test; they were either right or wrong, and there was only one possible right answer.

The assumption that there is only one appropriate form of the English language appears in this excerpt through the implication that African American English is incorrect. In turns 24–26, Cindy repeats Dionna's utterance "You got an eraser?" by asking her, "Do you got?" In response,

Dionna changes her question to, “Do you have?” As noted earlier, we observed Cindy’s repeating students’ use of stigmatized language forms multiple times per class throughout the school year. In our data set of 27 transcribed videotapes of the Daily Language Practice, Cindy repeated and implicitly corrected students’ use of African American English 12 times. Although Cindy’s overarching goal was to teach her students “the codes of power” (Delpit, 1988, p. 293) by insisting that they speak Standard English in class, in this excerpt, Cindy’s repetition of Dionna’s use of African American English implies that it is incorrect language because her implicit correction of Dionna’s language is framed by a language ideology that categorizes all language dichotomously as either correct or incorrect.

The ritualized structure of the Daily Language Practice made it difficult for students to voice alternate perspectives on language and language learning during the activity; however, at points in this excerpt and throughout our observational and video-recorded data, some of the students seemed to question or contest the language ideologies reflected in the curriculum, the structure of the activity, and Cindy’s talk. We were unable to ask students for their interpretations of this excerpt because our detailed analysis of the lesson took place after data collection, but the patterns of students’ behavior that emerged across our observational and video-recorded data suggest that students did not always agree with the dominant views of language and language learning implicit in the Daily Language Practice. In particular, throughout the year, many students seemed to contest Cindy’s framing of their use of African American English and informal dialects as incorrect by ignoring her implicit requests for Standard English, by sucking their teeth when she repeated a student’s utterance, and sometimes, as we show in excerpt 2, by explicitly expressing alternative language ideologies. In excerpt 1, after Dionna has repeated “You got an eraser?” in Standard English as “Do you have an eraser?” Miesha repeats Cindy’s implicit correction, “Do you got?” Because Dionna had already given Cindy the preferred form of this statement and because the tone of Miesha’s voice was mocking, Miesha’s repetition of Dionna’s utterance seems to be suggesting that using *got* instead of *have* is appropriate in this setting and should not be corrected. Overall, in our data set of transcribed videotapes of the Daily Language Practice, students initially refused to change their speech to Standard English a third of the time Cindy requested it. In some cases, students changed their speech only after Cindy repeated their use of African American

English or an informal dialect multiple times; other times students refused entirely.

Another way that students expressed disagreement with specific statements made by Cindy or with the structure of the Daily Language Practice activity was by repeating Cindy’s ritualized phrases in mocking tones or at inappropriate times. In turn 13 of excerpt 1, after Cindy asks Dionna if Harry is correct, Harry repeats softly, in a mocking tone, “Am I correct?” Here Harry seems to be mimicking Cindy to highlight the prescriptive view of language use implied by asking students to publicly judge the correctness of one another’s answers. Similar exchanges took place between Cindy and students in all three sections of her class. During the December 10 Daily Language Practice, for instance, a student named Keith repeated mockingly, “Am I correct?” after Cindy asked another student to evaluate Keith’s transformation of the practice sentence. Later during the same activity, when a student named Apollo finished his transformation of the sentence on the board, another student called out, “Apollo, you are wrong,” imitating Cindy’s phrasing and intonation. Students repeated Cindy’s ritualized phrases or explicitly questioned the structure of the Daily Language Practice 21 separate times in our data set of 27 transcribed videotapes.

Excerpt 2.

Immediately following excerpt 1, Ali goes to the chalkboard and places a comma after *party* and changes *Him* to *him*. The sentence now reads, “Romeo sneaks into the Capulets party, him and Juliet see each other and fall in love.” Cindy then calls Dan to the board, and he changes the sentence to read: “Romeo sneaks into the Capulets party, him and Juliet see each other, and fall in love.”

1 Cindy: (*reading from the chalkboard*) Romeo sneaks into the Capulets party comma him and Juliet see each other comma and fall in love. Dan, why’d you put a comma after *other*? (*3-second pause*)

2 Dan: I don’t know.

3 Cindy: That is a middle school response, my dear; you have been in this [class all year long.

4 Dan: [You want me to guess, just guess?

5 Cindy: It’s a guess.

Cindy calls on three students who were not participants in the study to evaluate Dan’s work and then to make changes to the sentence on the chalkboard.

6 Harry: (*sitting in his seat*) I think *Capulets* needs to be lowercase, and a comma after *party*.

7 Miesha: I think you suppose to erase comma after *sneaks*, and put a semicolon after *party* and put a comma [after.

8 Student: [Why don’t you go up there?

- 9 Miesha: 'cause man, man this is [xx]. (*laughing*) I ain't going nowhere.
- 10 Cindy: You ain't going nowhere?
- 11 Miesha: I ain't going nowhere.
- 12 Cindy: You ain't going nowhere. (*slowly, as she nods her head up and down*)
- 13 Miesha: I mean, I in my seat right now, Mrs. Werner, if I stand up in front of you (*rising pitch, pointing finger at Cindy*) I will ta-speak proper, whatever you call it. But I'll speak in proper slang right now.

Cindy does not respond. She walks to the chalkboard and begins to edit the sentence.

During the second excerpt from the June 1 Daily Language Practice activity, the students question the dominant language ideologies in the activity and present alternative language ideologies. As Bloome et al. (2003) and Gal (1998) noted, all language ideologies are contested by competing views about what language is and does. In turn 4 of excerpt 2, Dan questions Cindy's insistence that he explain his answer even though he has already said that he does not know why he added a comma. We surmise that Dan added the comma for no particular reason because Cindy required students make at least one change in the sentence on the chalkboard when they were called on. By saying, "You want me to guess, just guess?" Dan seems to be telling Cindy that he truly does not know the conventions of written Standard English he is supposed to apply here and seems to be questioning how publicly guessing will help him or other students learn about academic language. Indeed, after analyzing videotapes of the Daily Language Practice activity, Cindy was struck by how many students seemed to be guessing when they attempted to transform the practice sentences, even toward the end of the school year when they had practiced many of the same sentence-level conventions and structures multiple times.

In other places in the excerpt, students seem to contest the prescriptive approach to language supported by the Daily Language Practice by disrupting the official IRE participation structure of the activity. In turns 6 through 9, Harry and Miesha talk to each other about changing the practice sentences even though they have not been recognized by Cindy. In turn 8, an unidentified student who was off-camera suggests that Miesha go to the board, taking up Cindy's role in the activity structure as the person who has the authority to ask students to go to the board. By discussing the sentence with each other and taking up Cindy's managerial role in the activity, students position themselves as authorities on lan-

guage by offering varying opinions about what the appropriate transformation of the sentence might be. This discussion allows the students to position themselves as knowledgeable language users and learners, both through publicly testing out theories about the structure and punctuation of written Standard English and through trying to convince one another of the solution rather than waiting to be evaluated by the teacher.

Similar conversations between various groups of students occurred eight times in our data set of transcribed videotapes of the Daily Language Practice and suggested that many students were more engaged by grammar instruction that allowed them to self-select for participation and discuss possible answers with each other. For example, on another day, a group of students attempted to figure out the difference between denoting titles of short stories and titles of books in order to help Jasmine, who was at the chalkboard working on the Daily Language Practice. "Erase that underline, then," suggested one student. "Put *lives* back and take off the underline," called out another. In an exchange that spanned 12 turns at talk, various students called out suggestions to Jasmine, asked clarifying questions to Cindy, and explained their reasoning without being prompted (December 10 Daily Language Practice transcript). These conversations suggest that students were more willing to attempt appropriate transformations of the sentences and to explain their answers when they could collaborate with and debate one another.

Excerpt 2 ends with Miesha's explicit disagreement with Cindy's portrayal of African American English as incorrect (turns 9 through 13). In turn 11, Miesha refuses to alter her use of two features of African American English—multiple negation and *ain't*—after Cindy repeats Miesha's utterance "I ain't going nowhere" twice, in turns 10 and 12. The first time Cindy repeats this utterance, Miesha repeats, "I ain't going nowhere," emphasizing the wording of her original statement. The second time, Cindy's serious tone seems to lead Miesha to explain why she will not change her utterance to a more preferred dialect. Miesha says, "I mean, I in my seat right now, Mrs. Werner, if I stand up in front of you I will speak proper, whatever you call it. But I'll speak in proper slang right now." Miesha directs her explanation to Cindy only, not to the entire class, implying that she is disagreeing with Cindy's view of language. She makes a distinction between the kind of language that would be appropriate if she were in her seat, talking to a friend, and if she were standing "up in front of" Cindy, emphasizing the variety of linguistic forms she is capable of using in different situations

and her right to use those forms. Through her repetition of the term *proper*, Miesha contrasts the implied definition of proper in the Daily Language Practice activity—standard or academic dialects of English—with her own definition: the language that is appropriate to the situation. In Miesha's view of language, it is "proper" that she is using "slang" (in other words, African American English) because she is in her seat talking to her classmate. The ideology of language Miesha expresses here contests the view of appropriate language as monolithic that dominated the Daily Language Practice curricular materials and activity.

Miesha's explicit disagreement with Cindy's correction of her language struck us as particularly significant because Miesha was one of the most engaged students in her class, often volunteered to participate in the Daily Language Practice activity, and seemed to have a collegial relationship with Cindy throughout the school year. Cindy's reaction to the videotape of this Daily Language Practice lesson revealed the tension Cindy felt between helping her students master academic language and recognizing that her students' different ways of speaking were valid. Cindy immediately understood Miesha's desire not to have her language judged by her teacher while she was talking to a friend, but at the same time, Cindy hoped that her students would practice using Standard English at all times in her classes and felt they needed this practice to become successful and productive students and citizens. After watching the videotape of the June 1 Daily Language Practice for the first time, Cindy told Amanda,

They [the students] wear different hats. For instance, if we're chilling on the front porch, we're going to be speaking one way just like when I'm hanging out with my friends I speak one way, except for some of my friends still correct me. Whereas when they [students] are talking to a parent, "Yes, ma'am. Yes, ma'am. Yes, ma'am." Um, they put on another hat when they walk into a classroom. It should be, you know, leave your social language out *there*.

Cindy recognized that Miesha and other students used different dialects in different parts of their lives, but faced with the pressure to prepare students for standardized tests and academic writing and limited instructional time, she felt responsible for focusing class time on written Standard English and on the kinds of test items that would appear on high-stakes tests, not on other aspects of language or other dialects. Reflecting on her teaching of grammar in the middle of the school year, Cindy told Amanda, "I want to go through those key things before March, before they take the exam. Because it's my fear that when it comes time for these, for the me-

chanics section on the New Standards [Reference Exam], they'll bomb that, and I don't want, I don't want to be a contributing factor to that because I didn't take the time to go through it."

Students' beliefs about language use and language variation at times aligned with Cindy's. Seven of the 11 students Amanda interviewed (see Appendix B for interview protocol) remarked that Cindy's insistence that they use spoken Standard English in class was needed, especially in order to obtain employment. For instance, A.J. said, "I think she's just trying to correct our words so when we go out for a job, we won't make a mistake about using a different word." However, all the focal students also expressed discomfort with or dislike of this pedagogical strategy, noting that it was "annoying," "too aggressive," and "made me feel goofy." Two of the 11 students said that they tried not to speak in class to avoid being corrected. Like the African American parents in Ogbu's (1999) study, the students' beliefs about language variation and appropriate language use in academic contexts were complex and at times paradoxical: Many wanted to use the language they felt most comfortable with and most identified with in class, but they felt that one of the main purposes of their English class was to teach them the dialects of English valued in mainstream institutions.

However, all of the students Amanda interviewed expressed a view of language that, like Miesha's, posited appropriate language as varying according to audience and context rather than as monolithic. In all 11 interviews, students noted that they altered their language for specific audiences and purposes and that such language variation was appropriate. Beverly explained,

When I'm at home, I speak just like any way it come out. Everybody know what I'm talking about. They're like—certain places in school when I'm around some people I speak differently. Like Mr. [xx], 'cause that's somebody who can be a reference for you one day.

Many students noted that they tried to speak "properly" at school but spoke "slang" with their friends and "mixed it up" with their families. Students' descriptions of their own use of language suggest that the portrayal of the English language as monolithic in Daily Language Practice was at odds with the language ideologies and linguistic experiences of the students.

Our findings also included a number of indicators that students' understanding of language use and written Standard English grammar did not improve as a result of the Daily Language Practice. Our analy-

sis of transcribed videotapes of Daily Language Practice indicate that students did not get better at transforming the sentences into written Standard English as the school year progressed; even at the end of the school year, two thirds of the changes students made to the practice sentences did not reflect the grammar and conventions of written Standard English. In addition, students often seemed not to understand Cindy's explanations of the grammar and conventions of written Standard English. In excerpt 2 above, Harry's second suggestion for transforming the sentence ("I think *Capulets* needs to be lowercase, and a comma after *party*," turn 6) demonstrates that he has not understood Cindy's earlier explanation that *Capulets* must be capitalized because it is the name of a family. Furthermore, in Amanda's interviews of 11 students, students were asked to name one aspect of written Standard English grammar or conventions that they had learned through Daily Language Practice and then were given a related sample sentence to either correct or explain. More than half of the students were not able to correct or explain the single convention or structure they said they had learned.

The results of our beginning- and end-of-the-year writing task and multiple-choice editing test also

suggested that students' understanding of the grammar and conventions of written Standard English did not improve significantly over the course of the school year. The timed writing task was coded for the frequency of written Standard English errors in students' timed essays. Each student essay was coded by two trained graduate students working independently; interrater reliability was 89%. Paired *t* tests compared the frequency of written Standard English errors in the beginning- and end-of-the-year writing samples. Though the mean decrease in errors in students' timed writing was 1.4 words per 100, the results were statistically nonsignificant at the .05 level of significance (see Table 3). Similarly, paired *t* tests comparing students' performance on the multiple-choice editing task demonstrated that the slight increase in students' scores was not statistically significant at the .05 level of significance, as indicated in Table 4.

Discussion

This study adds to current research on grammar and literacy in several ways. It illustrates how ideologies of language, like ideologies of literacy, are reflected in grammar instruction through state stan-

TABLE 3
MEAN FREQUENCY OF ERRORS PER 100 WORDS ON TIMED WRITING TEST

Pretest		Posttest	
<i>N</i> = 21		<i>N</i> = 21	
<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
12.8	03.8	11.4	04.6

Note: Paired *t* tests nonsignificant at *p* = 0.05.

TABLE 4
MEAN SCORES ON MULTIPLE-CHOICE EDITING TEST

Pretest		Posttest	
<i>N</i> = 23		<i>N</i> = 23	
<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
12.87	2.38	13.22	2.37

Note: Maximum score = 20. Paired *t* tests nonsignificant at *p* = 0.05.

dards and assessments, curriculum materials, classroom discourse, and similarities in the language of these written and oral texts. Our study also demonstrates how an analysis of the language ideologies inherent in grammar and literacy activities reveals the kinds of learning opportunities the activities provide students. In addition, this study contributes to research on grammar instruction by demonstrating that Daily Language Practice and similar editing activities such as Daily Oral Language represent language in ways that do not reflect current research in sociolinguistics, ignore the linguistic experiences of students who speak more than one dialect, and do not seem to increase students' understanding of written Standard English.

Our study also shows that the dominant language ideologies promoted by the Daily Language Practice activity conflicted with research on effective language and literacy instruction for speakers of African American English (Ball, Williams, & Cooks, 1997; Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1992; Lee, 2000). Students' home dialect, African American English, was neither validated through the activity (Delpit, 1995) nor viewed as a resource (Lee, 2000), but rather treated as a linguistic deficit because it did not adhere to the grammar of written Standard English. In addition, the curriculum and activity did not address links between language and identity or language and social power (Delpit & Dowdy, 2002; Gee, 1996). Our findings suggest that an activity meant to present language as simple in a brief and painless way, as the Daily Language Practice booklet suggests, cannot help students address the significant workings of language, identity, and power that both appear in and affect their lives. A teacher can, of course, choose to address issues of language, identity, and power independently of curricular materials; however, in our study the language ideologies reflected in the state standards and assessment, pressure to prepare students for standardized tests, and limited instructional time discouraged Cindy from addressing issues of language that did not seem to be essential to students' immediate academic success.

Cindy's perspective

The year of this study was the most challenging of my career, mostly because of all the new demands placed upon me by the district to teach a new curriculum, prepare students for two different standardized tests, and use a new computer program to help struggling readers and writers. I felt like I did not have as much academic freedom as I once had and that I was constantly jumping through hoops. I took part in the study of grammar instruction with Amanda because I like to learn new things. The day I stop learning is the day I stop teaching. The biggest challenge of

taking part in this study was finding time to meet with Amanda. If we work together again, I would want to spend more time collaborating on the focus of the study and codesigning instruction before the study begins. The most rewarding part of this study was talking with Amanda, sharing our views and ideas about education. I enjoy professional conversations, but I do not always get them as a teacher.

Since we began analyzing the data from the study, it has bothered me tremendously that I used Daily Language Practice when it did not seem to improve students' understanding of grammar and conventions, especially because I used it for 13 years in New Jersey. At the same time, if Amanda had told me at the beginning of the year that she did not think the Daily Language Practice was working, I probably would have said, "Well, it worked for me for 13 years in New Jersey! I am going to keep on doing it." I was not completely convinced until I saw the quantitative data from the beginning- and end-of-the-year writing and multiple-choice tasks. But my first thought when I saw the videotape of the June 1 Daily Language Practice was that many of the students who came to the board to correct the sentence seemed to be guessing; they did not seem to understand how to use capitalization or commas, even though we had done other Daily Language Practice sentences on those topics. I do not think at the time I realized how confused some of the students were. Perhaps I should have stopped the Daily Language Practice right there and begun a minilesson on proper nouns or comma usage.

In the end, I do not think I would use Daily Language Practice or a similar grammar/editing activity again. At first, I tried to imagine ways I could revise it to make it more effective by focusing on errors that I saw in students' writing, adding more instruction (rather than just practice), and reducing the public evaluations of students while still making sure all students participated. However, after analyzing the videotapes and the students' pre- and posttest scores, I think it would be more productive to find a new way to teach the grammar and conventions of Standard English. I still think it is important that students speak Standard English in school, but I hope to analyze students' talk in my class to better understand their reactions to my insistence that they use Standard English.

Implications for practice

Our findings suggest that grammar and language instruction needs to be reconceptualized in order to promote language ideologies that are reflective of current research in linguistics, that help students become more proficient in written Standard English, and that build upon students' linguistic experiences in positive ways. We are not arguing that our data show that grammar and language instruction has no merit, as has been suggested in the past (Braddock et al., 1963; Hillocks, 1986), but rather that in order to help students master the dialects valued in mainstream academic, civic, and economic institutions in the United States, literacy educators need to develop an approach to grammar instruction that recognizes language variation, connections between language form and meaning, and students' existing knowledge about language.

We would like to suggest an approach to grammar instruction that is anchored in Bakhtin's (2004)

notion of dialogic teaching. Bakhtin demonstrated how conversations between students and teachers about sentence structure and meaning can lead to improvements in students' academic writing. This *dialogic* approach to grammar instruction forefronts students' voices and opinions, presenting grammar as a set of rhetorical choices and representing language as dynamic (Godley, 2004). This approach expands the boundaries of grammar instruction to *language* instruction, asking students to think about the choices they make as language users and the reasons behind those choices. It also refocuses language and grammar instruction on conventions and effectiveness rather than on rules and correctness, as prescriptive approaches do. This approach contextualizes the teaching of the grammar and conventions of written Standard English within an understanding of the English language as including many different dialects, spoken and written, that are used for diverse purposes and audiences.

Furthermore, if one of the goals of literacy educators is to draw upon students' funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992) in order to teach them the language and literacy skills needed for postsecondary education, critical citizenship, and economic empowerment, grammar instruction needs to expand to include the explicit discussion of language ideologies and their power. As Lu (2004) suggested, literacy education should reflect "the necessity and possibility of responsive and responsible uses of language...in a world rife with and riven by systems and relations of power" (p. 18). We believe it is critical that all students—speakers of stigmatized and standard dialects—gain an awareness of their own beliefs about language and language users so that language ideologies and their attendant power structures can be questioned and changed within broader social contexts. Such critical discussions of language also could create discursive spaces in which students' use of multiple dialects could be viewed as a resource rather than a deficit, creating opportunities to build upon their experiences with and beliefs about language. For example, Beverly's awareness that she speaks differently to her family members and to an adult who could be a reference for her someday could be used to spark a discussion about how and why the grammar and vocabulary of Beverly's language changes when she is speaking to different audiences.

In order to enact this critical, dialogic approach to grammar and language, we also advocate for the integration of grammar instruction into literacy learning. It is ironic that at a time when so much literacy research centers on language, literacy educators still promote grammar and language instruction that

is as minimal as possible and that is divorced from other literacy instruction. Applying what literacy educators know about successful literacy instruction, such as recognizing a variety of perspectives and exploring issues of representation, to language instruction could allow the study of language, including but not limited to academic language, to enhance academic literacy learning. For example, students could be asked to consider sentences such as "Mathilde loses the necklace. The Loisels must borrow a huge sum of money to buy a replacement" as part of a whole text with a specific purpose and audience. Students could then practice the multiple ways to combine these sentences into written Standard English, rather than just one way, and could discuss the effectiveness, implied meaning, and emphasis of each combination.

Implications for research

Because explicit grammar instruction seems to be increasing in U.S. K–12 schools, literacy researchers need to understand more about what students are learning about the grammatical structure and conventions of written Standard English and about the nature of language through grammar instruction. Our study suggests that what grammar instruction teaches students, both implicitly and explicitly, about the nature of language shapes the literacy learning opportunities provided to students, positions students as expert or deficient language users, and can challenge or promote patterns of societal discrimination based on language. For example, Cindy did not realize until she analyzed the videotaped Daily Language Practice activities that her insistence that students speak Standard English during the Daily Language Practice promoted a view of African American English as incorrect, ungrammatical English. Furthermore, if one of our goals as researchers is to disrupt dominant language ideologies that reinforce discrimination against particular social groups such as African Americans, as Alim (2005), Wolfram et al. (1999), and other educational linguists have suggested, we need to understand how common-sense narratives about "correct" language become persuasive in educational contexts (Bloome et al., 2005). As Alvermann, Young, Green, and Wisenbaker (1999) pointed out, questioning dominant views of literacy is political work. The ideologies of language inherent in the Daily Language Practice and similar editing activities are easier to manage, evaluate, and transmit than assumptions about language that account for variation and context. For these reasons, the language ideologies presented through the Daily Language Practice are also com-

patible with the current standardization movement in U.S. education. We believe that the theory of language ideologies has much to offer research in literacy learning as we grapple with how to define our field in an era of standardization and in an increasingly multilingual, multiliterate, and multimodal world (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; Lu, 2004; Luke, 2004).

We would also like to see more research that is design-based—that is, research that puts into practice critical, dialogic grammar instruction and studies its enactment and effects systematically. Despite considerable theoretical work on critical approaches to language instruction, particularly for speakers of stigmatized dialects, educational researchers have given minimal attention to the systematic study of empirical practice. Design-based research is well suited for such studies because it views educational interventions, the contexts in which they take place, and the outcomes of such interventions as inseparable (Bannan-Ritland, 2003; Cobb, Confrey, diSessa, Lehrer, & Schauble, 2003). It also encourages the kind of critical, collaborative reflection on pedagogy that we undertook during our analysis of the data but that was absent from the data collection phase of our study. We view our study as limited by the lack of communication between Amanda and Cindy during data collection and our resulting inability to collaboratively revise the Daily Language Practice activity during data collection. Because design research calls for collaborative reflection upon and revision of the instructional intervention as it is being implemented, it promotes more communication between researchers and teachers during a research project. We would also recommend that a fine-grained analysis of the discourse surrounding new grammar pedagogies might offer a more detailed account of their effects, especially because we envision such pedagogies as dialogic.

We predict that Daily Language Practice and similar editing activities will continue to be appealing to teachers and school districts because they parallel the editing tasks on standardized tests, they are compatible with popular notions of teaching grammar in context, and they reflect widespread language ideologies about Standard English, appropriate language use, and stigmatized dialects of English. The current atmosphere of standardization is but one reason that we believe the field of literacy studies should not continue to overlook grammar and language instruction and should instead work to integrate it into literacy learning in productive ways. Language is both the means and the object of English language arts instruction (Luke, 2004) and thus cannot be separated from literacy learning. We would like to see the field of literacy studies apply its profound understanding

of the role of language in learning and the ideological nature of literacy towards affecting curricular and pedagogical change, so that literacy educators will be encouraged to teach students more accurate, useful, and rich understandings of the English language than daily editing activities can provide.

AMANDA J. GODLEY is an assistant professor of English education at the University of Pittsburgh, where she teaches courses on classroom discourse, teaching writing, and theories of literacy. Her research interests include grammar and language instruction, classroom discourse, and the practice of gender in urban high school English classes. She can be reached at the University of Pittsburgh, Department of Instruction and Learning, 5111 Wesley W. Posvar Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, USA, or by e-mail at agodley@pitt.edu.

BRIAN D. CARPENTER is currently a teaching fellow and doctoral student in English education in the Department of Instruction and Learning at the University of Pittsburgh. His current research interests include issues of language and power, and sociocultural theory. He can be contacted at University of Pittsburgh, Department of Instruction and Learning, 5500 Wesley W. Posvar Hall, Pittsburgh, PA 15260, USA, or by e-mail at brc10@pitt.edu.

CYNTHIA A. WERNER is an English teacher at an urban high school where she teaches honors and mainstream English and reading. She has been an educator for 23 years, 22 in urban schools. She taught for 13 years at Eastside High School in Paterson, New Jersey, with principal Joe Clark, the subject of the film *Lean on Me*. She received a bachelor's degree in secondary education and English, a master's degree in psychological studies, and completed coursework towards a doctorate in clinical psychology. She can be contacted at 2628 Glenchester Road, Wexford, PA 15090, USA, or by e-mail at werner7867@comcast.net.

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APPENDIX A

TRANSCRIPT KEY

[= overlapping talk
<i>italics</i>	= authors' comment/description of nonverbal activities
[xx]	= unclear talk
[words]	= authors' guess at words spoken
–	= self interruption or interruption
?	= interrogative or upward intonation
.	= downward intonation (as in a statement)
:	= sound extended
,	= short pause
...	= long pause or trailing off comment
<u>word</u>	= stressed word
Student	= unidentifiable student

SEMISTRUCTURED STUDENT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. What is your favorite subject? How do you like (have you liked) English? How does Ms. Werner's class compare to your previous English classes? What's your favorite and least favorite part of your English classes?
2. How do you like writing?
3. What does the term *grammar* mean to you?
4. Are you learning about grammar and language in your English class this year? In what ways? What activities did you find the most useful?
5. Before this year, were you taught grammar in school? How?
6. What are the areas of grammar and usage that you are best or most confident at? That you still need the most improvement in or are unsure of? (Students can look through their academic essays.)
7. What do you think about Daily Language Practice? What are you learning?
8. Specific questions about essays and previous work:
 - a. What does this teacher feedback mean to you?
 - b. What did you change in your revision and why?
 - c. How do you proofread? What grammar and conventions do you look out for?
9. What's your opinion of when Ms. Werner repeats what a student has said (like "I ain't got no homework")? What do you think Ms. Werner's goal is? Do you think students should only speak Standard English or Business-Appropriate English in their classes?
10. How important do you think it is to learn Standard English? Why?
11. Do you use different codes or dialects in different parts of your life? What dialect or code do you use in your academic writing?
12. How do these dialects differ? (grammars, words, accents, etc.)
13. Have you ever talked in school (in your English classes) about the differences between the dialects that you use?
14. Do you think most people use Standard English all the time?
15. Do you think people *should* use Standard English all the time or should they speak different ways in different situations?
16. What kind of student are you?
17. What do you plan to do after high school?

TIMED WRITING PROMPTS FROM PRE- AND POSTTESTS

Pretest writing prompt

Directions:

In “The Open Window,” Mrs. Sappleton’s niece lies to both Mr. Nuttel and Mrs. Sappleton, making up stories about each of them. We all have been lied to or have lied to others at some point in our lives.

Think about a time you told a lie or were lied to that stands out in your memories. Describe this experience and its results, being sure to include enough details so that your reader can share your experiences. Show why this memory stands out for you.

As you write and rewrite your paper, remember to:

- Describe what happened.
- Give details that are specific and relevant.
- Present your ideas clearly and logically.
- Use words and well-constructed sentences effectively.
- Correct any errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Posttest writing prompt

Directions:

In *The Wave*, students at Gordon High School who refuse to join the Wave are threatened by Wave members. Laurie Sanders, the editor of the school newspaper, decides to stick up for them.

Think about a time you stuck up for someone who was being picked on or harassed. Describe this experience and its results, being sure to include enough details so that your reader can share your experiences. Show why this memory stands out for you.

As you write and rewrite your paper, remember to

- Describe what happened.
- Give details that are specific and relevant.
- Present your ideas clearly and logically.
- Use words and well-constructed sentences effectively.
- Correct any errors in spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

SAMPLES OF MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS FROM PRE- AND POSTTESTS

Then, the board members lost interest, and that leaves Jonathan and me.

What correction should be made to this sentence?

- A. Then, the board members have lost interest, and that leaves Jonathan and me.
- B. Then, the board members lost interest, and that left Jonathan and me.
- C. Then, the board members had lost interest, and that leaves Jonathan and me.
- D. No correction necessary.

He was good looking, witty, and people had fun around him.

What corrections should be made to the underlined part of this sentence?

- A. looking good, witty, and people thought he was fun.
- B. good looking and witty and people thought he was fun.
- C. good looking, witty, and fun.
- D. No correction necessary.

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